

The City’s System-Wide Vision for the Green Line

It is the City’s desire and expectation that the Green Line will provide access to jobs, housing, services, and cultural and recreational resources in Northwest Seattle, Southwest Seattle and the Center City through a well-connected network of monorail stations, pedestrian, bicycle and transit facilities. The monorail will also be a defining element of urban form within the communities it serves, and will be designed to reinforce existing character and support neighborhood development objectives. Within this larger vision, the City is crafting—with community input—a concept for each station area and segment of the monorail corridor that builds on the objectives and policies of the City’s Comprehensive Plan and respective adopted neighborhood plans.

Ballard Concept

15th Avenue Northwest exists today as a valuable freight corridor through Ballard to Interbay and beyond, a well-used transit street for Ballard residents; and the location of a variety of primarily auto-oriented businesses. Although the corridor serves these functions well individually, the pedestrian elements and scale of the streetscape is lacking and not living up to the potential of the urban village vision. With the arrival of the monorail comes an opportunity for 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW corridor to become a true intermodal corridor and the “spine” of a local transportation network. This network will connect the Crown Hill and Ballard Urban Villages and adjacent neighborhoods to areas within and outside Ballard. In the process, there is an opportunity to improve the 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue streetscape and bring it up to a quality befitting the Crown Hill neighborhood plan and 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW Association vision.

Located at the intersection of two major transportation and transit corridors, the Crown Hill station is poised to become the true center of the Urban Village. Opportunities for increased mixed-use development north and south of the station, housing above pedestrian-oriented commercial uses at the ground level, and enhanced and active streetscapes along both 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW/Holman Road NW and NW 85<sup>th</sup> Street will help create a neighborhood-focused “place” out of this crossroads.

The focus of the NW 65<sup>th</sup> Street station is to serve the surrounding single family and multi-family neighborhoods and Ballard High School. Apart from some additional retail services developed immediately around the station, the area is not expected to change significantly. There is additional zoning capacity for more and greater density of housing in the streets east and west of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue which would be a positive complement to the area. A secondary goal would be to encourage the development of pedestrian oriented uses along 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW.

The challenge with the NW Market Street station will be to serve the surrounding community without drawing off the developing vibrancy of both Downtown and Historic Ballard. The station will be both a focal point for the surrounding residents, particularly as density in the area increases, and a point of departure for visitors to the area. With Market Street and 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue as major transit corridors, the station will serve as the connecting point for many commuters and a portal for visitors. The area could develop as the gateway to Ballard with the ability to handle additional growth in both jobs and residents. It is identified as a commuter stop out of respect for downtown Ballard, but could become a commuter stop with a thriving streetscape that is a extension of the vibrancy of Ballard.

Key Corridor Elements and Actions

Corridor Operations

Because the monorail guideway will change the configuration of streets along the Green Line corridor, the City will reexamine how these streets will function in the future for general traffic, transit, freight, bicycles, and pedestrians. Key actions for the Ballard segment may include:

- Using the *Envision 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW* document as a starting point for ideas on how to enhance the corridor.
- Ensuring that existing freight corridor performance is maintained while enhancing the pedestrian.
- Creating safe parallel routes along both 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue for bicycles to access the stations and surroundings.
- Determining the most appropriate bus stop configuration given dual goals of efficient transit operations and minimizing impacts to general purpose traffic.

Land Use Policy

The monorail guideway will effectively create a new “zone” along 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW within which the guideway structure and monorail transit service are each defining elements of urban form. A context-specific guideway overlay could include features such as:

- Reduced parking requirements to encourage redevelopment.
- Development standards to support new street design plans such as driveway locations & street furniture requirements.
- The prohibition of certain auto-oriented uses such as gas stations, drive through businesses and outdoor storage.

Streetscape Design

Insertion of the monorail guideway into city streets will necessitate re-design of the corridor streetscape. Columns will typically be located in a parking or travel lane on the side of the street, creating an opportunity to consider a menu of streetscape design options. Actions applicable to 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW may include:

- Wider sidewalks
- Parking or bus stops between columns.
- New bus transit zones.
- New/consistent corridor-wide landscape elements.

Key Station Area Elements and Actions

Station Area Access

The key to making the most of the monorail is to provide a network of clear, safe, and well-detailed paths providing multiple options for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders to reach each station. In this way, the monorail can serve as one part of an interconnected transportation system for intra- and inter-neighborhood mobility. Toward that end, each station will have a comprehensive access plan outlining needed improvements. Key actions for Ballard stations may include:

- Improving major pedestrian routes, providing connections to and from existing bicycle routes, transit connections and areas for pick-up and drop-off.
- Increasing local transit service at the 65th Street station to access key destinations such as the Locks, Shilshole and Golden Gardens and to connect Ballard, Crown Hill, and surrounding neighborhoods.

Land Use & Zoning

The Comprehensive Plan and Neighborhood Plan for the Crown Hill and Ballard urban villages envision high-capacity transit, and transit and pedestrian-oriented streetscapes. However, current land use policy and zoning may not

Key Station Area Elements and Actions *continued*

provide the best mix of incentives for this kind of development. Key actions for Ballard include:

- Designating a pedestrian zone along the corridors of 15th Avenue NW, NW 85th Street and NW Market Street within the station areas to encourage pedestrian oriented uses in and design of new structures.
- Designating Station Area overlays at each station to prevent the further development of auto oriented uses and encourage more pedestrian-oriented uses.
- Changing the Commercial zones in the Crown Hill and Market Street station areas to Neighborhood Commercial.

Parking

Following guidance from the City’s Comprehensive Plan, the Green Line project does not envision new park-and-ride facilities and instead emphasizes alternatives to private automobile access to transit stations. To ensure that monorail stations do no create parking problems within station areas, a parking mitigation plan will be developed and implemented by SMP and the City of Seattle Department of Transportation. Key actions may also include:

- Restricting visitor parking through time-limit (1 or 2-hour) signs and/or paid parking technology (new pay station technology).
- Designating passenger, truck and load/unload zones.
- Implementing a residential parking zone (RPZ).
- Exploring shared parking opportunities between residential and non-residential uses.

Public Realm

Beyond basic access improvements, there are opportunities to enhance the public realm around each station in support of transit and pedestrian-oriented development. These kinds of improvements are often what lend identity and character to communities and make them memorable. Key actions in Ballard may include:

- Preparing a 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue street master plan to coordinate all streetscape and pedestrian amenities.
- Pedestrian-friendly or scaled paving, landscaping, lighting, and street furniture.
- Using the space under the guideway structure to provide pedestrian amenities such as lighting, signage, bus/weather shelters, public art, landscaping.
- Creating pockets of public space for outdoor cafes or other uses where wider sidewalks provide the opportunity to do so.
- Street furniture including benches and bicycle racks.
- Consistent landscape and /or pavement treatment.
- Open space improvements such as a community information kiosk.

Strategic Development Site

Supporting transit through development requires appropriate zoning, available sites for redevelopment, and a ready market. Redevelopment of currently underutilized sites, or sites that could have a strong relationship to a monorail station could be key actions to encourage desired development more broadly within station areas. A key site in Ballard is the lot to the north of the Crown Hill station, at the southwest corner of NW 85th Street and 15th Avenue NW. This lot will be used as a staging area for construction of the Monorail station. Upon completion of construction, the redevelopment of this parcel will be a key component of the successful design of the intersection and use of the area around the station.

